



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

**Office of the  
Assistant Secretary  
for Administration**

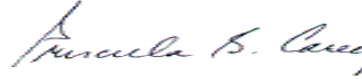
Office of Operations

1400 Independence  
Avenue SW

Washington, DC  
20250-9800

August 12, 2003

TO: All USDA Employees in the Headquarters Complex

FROM: Priscilla B. Carey   
Director of Operations

THROUGH: John Surina  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration

SUBJECT: Temporary Food Services in the South Building Cafeteria

In the two weeks since the reopening of the South Building cafeteria, my staff has worked diligently to identify the root problems that contributed to the closing. Experts in food service and facilities management, from the government and the private sector, conducted independent evaluations and compared results. All parties agree that to deal effectively with the pest control issues over the long term, the drop ceilings in the kitchen and serving area need to be replaced. As a result, we will be replacing these ceilings and closing any openings found above them. In addition, other smaller repairs will be completed in the serving area. To get this work started and completed as quickly as possible, the kitchen, serving and cashier areas will be closed starting this Thursday, August 14, 2003.

Our food service provider, Eurest, will continue to offer breakfast and lunch service from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily during construction. They will provide beverages and self-service "grab and go" foods (prepared by their suppliers and delivered daily) from stations at the back of the cafeteria. The cafeteria's main seating area and the Ritazza coffee bar will remain open, as will the Whitten Building's cafeteria and third floor dining rooms. Extra staff will be working in the Whitten locations to handle any higher than normal customer traffic. Eurest will continue to post its weekly menus on USDA's intranet web site at: <http://www.hqnet.usda.gov/>. To open the menus, scroll to the bottom left of the page and click on the desired food service location.

We apologize for the fact that we are unable to provide a completion date for the construction work at this time, and for any inconvenience this may cause you. Our contractors are instructed to complete this work as soon as possible. After the work is underway and the site conditions are more closely evaluated, you will be provided with a firm completion date. We hope you agree that whatever it takes to achieve a higher standard of food service in USDA, and to regain your confidence, is worth the effort.